

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method to manage network addresses, comprising:
receiving a first request for a network address from a client at an agent;
procuring said network address by said agent for said client from a network address provider; and
sending said network address to said client.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said first request is received using a first protocol, and said procuring comprises:
creating a second request for said network address using a second protocol;
sending said second request to a network address provider;
receiving said network address from said network address provider; and
storing said network address in an address assignment table.
3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein said creating comprises:
assigning a unique identifier to said client; and
creating said second request using said unique identifier.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising managing use of said network address by said client.
5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein said managing comprises:
 - receiving an assignment identifier corresponding to said network address, said assignment identifier indicating a status and time period said client may use said network address;
 - monitoring a time said client has used said network address;
 - comparing said time to said time period; and
 - requesting an extension to said time period in accordance with said comparison.
6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said network address provider is a dynamic host configuration protocol server.
7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said network address comprises an Internet Protocol address.
8. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein said first protocol is a layer two tunneling protocol.
9. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein said second protocol is a transport control protocol and internet protocol.

10. (Currently Amended) A method to create a virtual connection to a network, comprising:

receiving a message by an agent from a client requesting a virtual connection;

sending a request for assignment of a network address by said agent for said client;

receiving said network address; and

creating said virtual connection using said network address.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said creating comprises creating said virtual connection using said network address in accordance with a security scheme.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein said security scheme is a security scheme in accordance with the DES Specification.

13. (Currently Amended) An article comprising:

a storage medium;

said storage medium including stored instructions that, when executed by a processor, result in receiving a first request for a network address from a client at an agent, procuring said network address by said agent for said client from a network address provider, and sending said network address to said client.

14. (Original) The article of claim 13, wherein the stored instructions, when executed by a processor, further result in receiving said request using a first protocol, and said

procuring results in creating a second request for said network address using a second protocol, sending said second request to a network address provider, receiving said network address from said network address provider, and storing said network address in an address assignment table.

15. (Original) The article of claim 14, wherein the stored instructions, when executed by a processor, further result in creating a second request by assigning a unique identifier to said client, and creating said second request using said unique identifier.

16. (Original) The article of claim 13, wherein the stored instructions, when executed by a processor, further result in managing use of said network address by said client.

17. (Original) The article of claim 16, wherein the stored instructions, when executed by a processor, further result in managing use of said network address by receiving an assignment identifier corresponding to said network address, said assignment identifier indicating a status and time period said client may use said network address, and monitoring a time said client has used said network address, comparing said time to said time period, and requesting an extension to said time period in accordance with said comparison.

18. (Currently Amended) An article comprising:
a storage medium;

said storage medium including stored instructions that, when executed by a processor, result in creating a virtual connection to a network by receiving a message by an agent from a client requesting a virtual connection, sending a request for assignment of a network address by said agent for said client, receiving said network address, and creating said virtual connection using said network address.

19. (Original) The article of claim 18, wherein the stored instructions, when executed by a processor, further result in creating said virtual connection in accordance with a security scheme.

20. (Original) The article of claim 18, wherein the stored instructions, when executed by a processor, further result in creating said virtual connection in accordance with the DES Specification.